

**Amendments to the Claims:**

1-23. (canceled)

24. (previously presented): A projection exposure apparatus for microlithography, comprising:

an illumination system for generating projection light;

a projection objective comprising a plurality of optical elements for imaging a reticle onto a photosensitive surface; and,

an immersion device for introducing an immersion liquid into an immersion space formed between a last optical element on the image side of the projection objective and the photosensitive surface, wherein said immersion device is configured to introduce a flushing liquid different from the immersion liquid into the immersion space.

25. (canceled)

26. (canceled)

27. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the flushing liquid is capable of removing residues of used and contaminated immersion liquid from the immersion space.